

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LENDING 00967 081013Z

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ACTION SCSE-00

INFO OCT-01 EUR-10 ISO-00 SSO-00 /011 W
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O R 080924Z OCT 74

FM AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0776

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

UNCLAS LENDINGRAD 0967

EO 11652N/A

TAGS: CDES, CASC (OPPENHEIM, RAY AND WINIFRED

SUBJ: STATUS REPORT: OPPENHEIM ACCIDENT

REF: STATE 220852 AND PREVIOUS

1. CONGEN OFFICERS ARRIVED AT HOSPITAL IN KRESTTSY RPT KRESTTSY AT 2200 OCT 7. EARLIER INFORMATION THAT LOCATION WAS AT KRECHEVITSY WAS IN ERROR. KRESTTSY LOCATED APPROXIMATELY 55 MILES SOUTH OF NOVGOROD.

2. OFFICERS INSPECTED SITE OF ACCIDENT ACCOMPANIED BY POLICE WHO WERE FIRST ON SCENE AFTER ITS OCCURRENCE. OPPENHEIMS' VOLVO AUTOMOBILE HAD BEEN IN HEAD-ON COLLISION WITH HEAVY TRUCK. AUTOMOBILE COMPLETELY DEMOLISHED. ACCIDENT OCCURRED AT APPROXIMATELY NOON OCT 7. MR AND MRS OPPENHEIM WERE TAKEN IMMEDIATELY TO NEAREST HOSPITAL FACILITY AT KRESTTSY. DESPITE ATTEMPTS AT TRANSFUSION AND RESUSCITATION, MRS WINIFRED OPPENHEIM DIED OF MASSIVE INJURIES WITHIN ONE HOUR OF ACCIDENT. SHE HAD LOST CONSCIOUSNESS AT MOMENT OF IMPACT AND NEVER REGAINED IT. PLEASE ADVISE FAMILY THAT POLICE AND MEDICAL AUTHORITIES ON SCENE STATE THERE WAS NO SUFFERING IN WAKE OF ACCIDENT.

3. MR RAY OPPENHEIM HAS FRACTURED SKULL WHICH IS NOT RPT NOT CONSIDERED SERIOUS AT THIS TIME. HE ALSO HAS COMPOUND MULTIPLE FRACTURE OF RIGHT LEG. EMBASSY DOCTOR DAVID MILLETT HAS EXAMINED X-RAYS OF SKULL AND LEG. OPPENHEIM AND MILLETT HAVE DEPARTED KRESTTSY AT 1230 LOCAL OCT 8 BY AMBULANCE FOR HOSPITAL IN LENINGRAD, PREPARATORY TO UNCLASSIFIED

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AIR EVACUATION TO HELSINKI ON FINNAIR FLIGHT LEAVING THURSDAY OCT 10.

CONGEN WILL CONFIRM ONWARD TRAVEL BASED ON DR MILLETT'S COUNSEL.

4. SOVIET TRUCK DRIVER AND TWO PASSENGERS WERE TREATED AT KRESTTSY HOSPITAL AND RELEASED. POLICE INVESTIGATION AS TO CIRCUMSTANCES OF ACCIDENT IS CONTINUING.

5. DISPOSITION OF REMAINS. AUTOPSY IS BEING PERFORMED TODAY IN NOVGOROD. A DECISION NOW REQUIRED AS TO DISPOSITION OF REMAINS. OPPENHEIM, WHO WAS LUCID BUT STILL OBVIOUSLY IN SHOCK AND UNDER SEDATION, STATED HIS PREFERENCE FOR HER BURIAL IN SOVIET UNION. REQUEST DEPT CONTACT WINIFRED'S MOTHER, MRS ELIZABETH MARSH, REGARDING HER VIEWS AS TO DISPOSITION. OPPENHEIM WILL ARRIVE LENINGRAD AFTERNOON OCT 8 AND CONSULAR OFFICER WILL AGAIN ASCERTAIN HIS VIEWS.
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